I am so glad to be able to send you £10. a quarter & that you are comfortable & have not had your cough – The Artists complain of want of coins sadly, how lucky I am not to be dependent on painting

My dear Maria

Rome 3d May 1870

I confess that I began to be anxious but your most interesting letter quite relieves me I am grieved that our dear brother suffers in his hands like myself for my fingers are sadly "out of drawing" & I cannot fairly take the octave you'll say for me this signifies but little but for him 'tis a serious drawback – I can perceive a great resemblance in our illnesses & I trust that his recovery may also be like mine, for altho' I am rather weak yet I am now equal to all my duties & I can walk 3 miles – All this has come about by the hot mineral waters of Petra (borax & iron) & I go there for the 4th time this Summer & again take the baths which now amount to more than 50, yet what I am not able to put on my stockings

or go up & down stairs easily,

Eleanors marriage is a great happiness to me altho' it has not only stript me of every penny but has left me considerably in debt for I have made over to her every thing in my power – I am very much satisfied with all the good fortune that has fallen to the share of this dear child – Mr Furneaux settles on her £5,500, & she has from me £1,000 & other sources near £1.500 so she'll be comfortable more than the daughter of a poor artist could in reason hope & this being the 5th wedding in my family I am comfortable beyond what I could dare hope for – and considering all my ups & downs I feel that I am blessed by a merciful Providence

Just now I have a visit from my son in law Charles Newton & as he has been like my Eleanors guardian & arranged all this happy business, do I hear from him all the details – Mr Furneaux is a most accomplished

Oxford scholar & of an good Devonshire family

Returning to the subject of rheumatism & its cure I may not have adopted the best means but I could not go to the famous places both for the distance as well as the great expence & this little cheap mountain town was the only cure I could catch at — I dont expect ever to be quite recovered at my age but I may be well content as I am once more in the enjoyment of life & quite equal to all my duties gaieties excepted — but I can do

This season has quite tired me & I long for the repose of the Villa mountains where I can walk & climb — The excellent Doctor receives me — My great trouble has been that the Pope took it in his head to pack off 3 English ladies at 24 hours notice to try & this I could not consent & I have had to fight a long battle but with success as the ladies are still here after 6 weeks

The question was whether I had the right of an Ambassador to protect them in my house for as I am only Consul this power is in doubt but I think it is now acknowledged, as I have got Lord Clarendons approval of all I have done, no doubt my ability must be respectable to enable me to excel in such difficult matters

for to all very well calling it rheumatism but you & I know better - 'tis well that I bear my years like a Trojan & the Papal ministers consider me 50, & I never "let on" but the world begins to smell that this year is my fiftieth from my arrival in Rome & [redacted] my years 77

The only drawback on the wedding was [redacted] cutting & contriving to send you a little "tin" but I may be able to do so soon when the interest is paid me (when!) of the Acqua Marcia which must be soon as the pipes are laid in Rome & I am looking with impatience to day

You see I presented the 50 shares (£1,000) to my daughter, but the trustees ordered the interest to be paid me during my life, this was civil (as things go) - Most certainly I have been uncommonly fortunate in every thing, for I cannot pretend ability or tact such as I have shown & such as I was called upon to show, I am amazed when I look back at what I seemed impossible!!

Your loving brother Joe